

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented): A process for the preparation of a compound of formula $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$ which comprises:

- a) reacting a compound of formula PX_3 with a compound of formula HNR^2R^3 in the presence of a solvent to form a compound of formula $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$; and
 - b) reacting the compound of formula $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$ with a compound of formula R^1-Y^1-H in the presence of a solvent to form the compound of formula $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$;
- wherein

R^1 represents a methyl group, a group of formula $-CH_2CH_2-Si(CH_3)_2C_6H_5$, $-CH_2CH_2-S(O)_2-CH_2CH_3$ or $-CH_2CH_2-C_6H_4-NO_2$, a group of formula $-CH_2CH_2CN$, or a phenyl, 4-chlorophenyl, 2-chlorophenyl, 2-nitrophenyl or 4-nitrophenyl group;

R^2 and R^3 each independently represent an alkyl group, or R^2 and R^3 are joined, together with the N to which they are attached, to form a 5-7 membered ring;

Y^1 represents O or S; and

X represents a halogen;

characterised in that the same solvent is employed in reaction a) and reaction b) and said solvent is a hydrocarbon solvent.

2. – 3. (canceled)

4. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein R^1 represents a group of formula $-CH_2CH_2CN$ and Y^1 represents O.

5. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1 or claim 4, wherein R^2 and R^3 each independently represent a C_{1-6} alkyl group.

6. (original): A process according to claim 5, wherein R^2 and R^3 represent isopropyl groups.

7. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein Y^1 represents O.

8. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein X represents Cl.

9. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the hydrocarbon solvent is toluene.

10. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the reaction between the compound of formula $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$ and the compound of formula R^1-Y^1-H in step b) takes place in the presence of a base.

11. (original): A process according to claim 10, wherein the base is a tri(C_{1-4} alkyl)amine.

12. (original): A process for the preparation of $\{(CH_3)_2CH\}_2N\}^{}_2-P-O-CH_2CH_2CN$, which comprises

- a) reacting PCl_3 with $\{(CH_3)_2CH\}_2N-H$ in toluene to form $\{(CH_3)_2CH\}_2N\}^{}_2-P-Cl$; and
- b) reacting $\{(CH_3)_2CH\}_2N\}^{}_2-P-Cl$ with $HO-CH_2CH_2CN$ in toluene to form $\{(CH_3)_2CH\}_2N\}^{}_2-P-O-CH_2CH_2CN$.

13. (currently amended): A process according to claim 1 or claim 12, wherein substantially anhydrous reaction conditions are employed.

14. (previously presented): A process for the preparation of a compound of formula $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$ which comprises reacting a compound of formula $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$ with a compound of formula R^1-Y^1-H in the presence of a solvent to form the compound of formula $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$
wherein

R^1 represents $NCCH_2CH_2-$; Y^1 represents O; R^2 and R^3 are each isopropyl, X is chloro, and the solvent is toluene.

15. (canceled)